デスマーチからはじまる異世界狂想曲

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Illustration:sime

2-1. Disaster Relief and the Shrine Maiden

Satou's here. Feeling like a veteran warrior, but after all I'm just an average citizen, Satou.

Although it's hard to call this a victory, for once, the battle is over.
Hereafter is the battle of lifesaving and rebuilding.

It's about time for a harem candidate to appear, right?

◇

I take off the robe and mantle in a desolate back-alley. Overlapping with all map exploration magic to check for human sign, I also took off my disguise.

Well it's just a wig and a mask though...

I put the disguise set and the robe in the forbidden folder inside the storage.
Which robe should I use now?

I take out a uselessly gaudy robe.
This one should be okay.

I decide to return to the street after changing to the gaudy robe. Of course, using a different route.

There's a soldier's corpse stuck on the tree branch along the way. To be flown to this place.... I join my hands to pray for it.

For now let's return to the plaza after performing an obligatory prayer.

"Err... The gaudy person over there~."

...Somehow there's a voice coming down from the tree.

Confirming on the radar, the corpse earlier isn't a corpse at all, somehow it's quite alive.
I look up.

"I'm sorry, could you call some soldiers? It's okay to do it after the battle in the plaza is over."

The first impression is quite favorable due to the absence of "help me". However even though the soldier is caught in the tree's branches... The hands and feet aren't turned toward strange directions.

Now then, is there any scaffolding to help the soldier?
...Guess I'll just kick that window and land on the other branch.

I fly to branch near the soldier. In consideration for possible fracture, I land while trying not to shake the branch.

"Well then, I'll carry you down so please don't move."
"Eh, how did you get here? Please don't push yourself and just call the other soldiers!"

I silently carry the soldier in my arms.
If the soldier has fractured bones then landing on the ground could be dangerous... Since there are at least 4 meter until the ground.
Thus, I jump to the slightly higher roof next to the branch.

"Though I jumped while taking care not to jolt you as much as possible, are you all right?"
"Yes, that surprised me but I'm fine."

I move from roof to roof in search of a house with an exit from atop the roof. There is a lot of unaired laundry, it probably got left behind after the demon came.

After checking for people on the radar, I get out of the house to the alleyway. I carry the soldier in princess hug to the plaza.

"Hey, I have a little question..."
"Yes, what is it?"
"Even if you were blown away by the demon, isn't it too far?"

This isn't a gag manga. From the plaza to here is more than 10 meter apart.

"I got blown away by the attack of that demon, since I would have died at that rate, I used magic to decelerate my falling speed. Although I was already running out of magic power. I was at loss when I got caught on that branch."

Magic seems to be usable even if one isn't a magician...

There is a temporary relief station in the plaza.
A bit away from the relief station, mats are placed and several 'people' are lined up there... It's not for the injured but for corpses huh...

"People who were rescued from the wreckages, please gather over here."

A woman in white coat shout for injured people to assemble over there, so I head there.

"For people who are holding the patient, please keep a little distance away from their body."

So she says, I stretch my arm to make a gap on my chest.

"I will cleanse the dirts, it may be surprising, so please don't drop them."

"■■■ ■■■■ ■■■■■ Soft Wash."

I got drenched along with the soldier. Certainly the dust and the blood (from the soldier who died first earlier) on the robe are gone.

>[Life Magic Acquired]

It's certainly a very useful magic. If there is this kind of magic then I wonder if bathing isn't needed?

"I will dry it immediately."

"■■■ ■■■■■ Dry."

"It's complete. Well then, please wait inside the circle drawn with chalks over there. That's the place where we gather injured people."

The white coat head toward the next person.
This is the first time I heard magic chant in close proximity but rather than word, I heard irregular sound instead. I guess it feels like the musical notes

from a DTM software?

Though it's not life-threatening the people who have broken bones are gathered there. It's full right after we got in. I don't have any injury, I'm here in order to learn new skills.

Two girls with priestess-like clothes and kind atmospheres quietly approach, each accompanied with their attendants.

"Now the Parion shrine maiden will grant you their miracle. Everyone, please be silent."
The attendant with big build shouted so to the injured peoples. And out of nowhere, the attendant with small build tells the tense people, "Please relax your body~".

After the injured people calmed down, the shrine maiden begin the magic chant.

「■■■■■　■■■■　■■■」
「■■■■　■■■■　■■■　■■■」
(Omitted... It's too long, priestess-san.)
「■■■■■　■■■■　■■■ Area Heal.」

>Holy Magic: Parion Belief Acquired

Most people seems to be healed by the magic just now.
The two attendants go around to give additional healing for people who need them.

The big attendant said, "Since it's a bone fracture, please rest quietly later",

while giving first aid to the soldier I carried.

Oh yes, this isn't a BL okay? Even though the soldier is still physically growing, she is an actual woman.

◇

Now then, I've learned various magic but I don't know their chant, there are magic shop and bookstore that sell magic books in the plaza, but the stores were destroyed so they're probably closed now...

"The good you do for others is the good you do for yourself."
<TLN: A Japanese idiom>

Let's make myself popular with the bookstore and the magic shop by helping them with selfish reasons in mind.

A carriage is half buried under the magic shop.
After confirming that there are no survivor near the carriage, I pull it out.
...When I think about it, I'm standing out by doing this, aren’t I?

There's a corpse in terrible condition stuck on the carriage, nausea is swelling up inside me... I'm weak with gore so please pardon me.

The inside of the magic shop has been destroyed but it seems that the people inside are fine because of a back door. Since I see people's figure on the radar beyond the back door, thinking that they're fine I head toward the bookstore.

The front wall of the bookstore is destroyed, it looks like it'll collapse any minute now. When I peek inside, numerous bookshelves have been toppled

and books are scattered around.
From the map, it seems that there are two people squashed under the bookshelves.

The bookshelves is lined up edge to edge, thanks to them being made with dense ebony, they're very heavy.
I raise the bookshelves ⇒ I cram the book between the shelves ⇒ Whenever I raise a bookshelf the leftovers books get in the way and then I can't raise the next bookshelf so the work take quite some time. Also partly because I'm afraid that the shelf will break if I try to forcefully raise it.
1 hour after the work begin, I finally able to rescue a person.

It's a boy of around 10 years old. He's unconscious but he's breathing. The HP is about half, I stop working and bring him to the relief station. I didn't forget to tell them that the boy was rescued from the bookstore.

It's not the priestess from earlier, but a person that looks like a magician who heals people with water magic. Huh, healing magic can be done with many elements.
There are more priests now but they all dress differently, I wonder if there are different sects.

Now then let's stop procrastinating and get back to work. Because the one left who need rescuing is certainly the storekeeper!

I continue the mundane work of raising the bookshelves and stowing away the books, until finally I was able to help the old man storekeeper buried in the books.
He didn't get crushed under the bookshelves but he seemed to be squashed by the fallen books, his HP is quite low. He's conscious though.

"Thank you very much for helping me."

It's an austere voice quite fit to be a seiyuu. What a romantic gray haired old man, he must've been quite popular back in the day.
Outside the store, the old woman and the daughter have come back. It seems that they went shopping to the west gate which was closed until just now.

I carry the old man to the relief station. The old woman also follows. The daughter remains in the store to clean things up.

In the relief station, the injured people who have come have increased even more. As expected the healer can't catch up. The two healer priestess attendants from earlier run out of MP and are sitting on the couch.

I search through the storage... there.
I take out 3 MP recovery medicine from my pocket and give it to the two attendants. It's a service for the skill I got earlier.
At first the big attendant was suspicious but after he knew that it was MP recovery medicine he thanked me.
...but, please stop drinking it in one gulp while having one hand in hip. You look like an old man.
The priestess is silent with a pale face looking down. I wonder if she's tired from using too much magic.

I leave the storekeepers to the relief station and head back to the store to help with the clean up.

I had forgotten the important matter.

The daughter of the bookstore. Her name is Semone-san. She's actually the granddaughter, and big-breasted! It's hidden by the clothes, but it's unmistakably E cup! With a long blond hair and a pair of blue eyes, she's about the same age as Nadi-san!

I'm correcting the bookshelf positioning while having a calm idle talk with her, I'm enjoying the work while placing the books which lost their binding in a box.
I love organizing books~

I mark all the interesting book during the placements.
Arrow marks can be seen in plenty through AR.

When the day is about to become dark the storekeepers come back.
I politely refuse the invitation for dinner, I purchase 3 books that catch my attention and go home. They wanted to give it as a thanks, but I compromise with just having slight discounts.

"Royal Capital Tourist Guide","Introductory Book for Life Magic", and "Life Magic Book" which should be 2 gold coin and 3 silver coin become 2 gold coin with the discount.

...Unfortunately, the bookstore daughter is married. The husband is a magician...

>Title [One Who Prays for the Dead] Acquired
>Title [Rescuer] Acquired
>Title [One Who Protects Books] Acquired

2-2. Let's Learn Life Magic!

Satou's here, even though there are many encounter, too bad that it immediately end, Satou.
Is it the face! It's the face isn't it!

◇

Because there were various things happening yesterday, I was fast asleep right after dinner.

Today is a reading day!
...Is what I thought, but the room is dark. There is a window for light to get through but it's still not enough to make books readable, it's too dim.

If I'm not mistaken there's an open terrace cafe neighboring this inn.
Let's eat a breakfast special on the coffee shop. I dunno if it exist but...

The tavern in first floor of the inn is crowded with people who are taking breakfast. It seems that the customers has increased a bit compared to yesterday.
I give the key to the landlady since I'm going out. Martha-chan happily greets me when I come out of the inn. This old man is dazzled by your morning radiance.

The gate also looks remarkably busier than the day before yesterday. Lots of big carriage are going in and out pulled by peasant-looking people. Do they not use cows or horses to pull it?

I immediately find the coffee shop when I look around outside. It's slightly

farther away than what I remember.

It seems that the coffee shop use the indoor for meal while the open terrace is for tea time. When I naturally ask the waitress, it doesn't seem that it's the owner's decision to do that. Because the inside of the shop is a bit dark, I secure a seat on the open terrace for easy reading.

For breakfast, I order a fruit and sandwiches. The sandwich has ham, vegetables and cheese sandwiched between the malt bread. The fruit juice is similar with Citrus. It tastes a bit richer than orange. The cup isn't made of glass but copper but since it's cold, it's still quite delicious. I wonder if it's cooled using life magic? My motivation to learn the magic increases~ ♪

Oh, yeah, there are 3 waitresses. A 20 year old plump red head, a 16 year old slender chestnut-colored hair with an impressive teardrop mole, and the last one is a girl who looks younger than 12 with a long black hair.

Everyone is working cheerfully.

While enjoying these sights, I read the introductory book for life magic.

Life magic is a magic not classified in any of the four main element of magic, it's a collection of magic useful for daily life. It's a magic incomparably weak compared to the elemental one. In exchange the required magic power is not much, at the level where people who can't use attack magic can use it. Nevertheless, even with so many convenient spells, most magicians look down upon life magic. They call magicians who can only use life magic, spell-users, and rather than as magicians, these people are treated as town handymen. Because of this prejudice there are only a few magicians who learn life magic. There are even lamentations regarding this written in the

book.

"Good morning, Satou-san!"

I was greeted from outside the terrace. It's Nadi-san.
I thought that she's still in shock from yesterday's event but she looks surprisingly energetic. She's strong even for an energetic archetype!

"Good morning. How is your condition, Nadi-san?"
"Thank you very much for your help yesterday. Not only did you help me get away from a dangerous location, you even sent me with a horse carriage."
"It's fine, it wasn't much."

Since she's here, I offered her a chair.

"Is that a book on life magic?"
"Yes, I bought it yesterday hoping to at least be able to use the basics."
Since my life magic skill is level 10, the only thing remaining is the chants though.

"For life magic, I recommend to practice Water Spring or Dry, depending on your main element. Most books usually recommend Ignition but if you cause fire in the town, it could be dangerous."

Certainly, it's just as she said.

"If it's Water Spring then you can store the water in a bucket, but please don't use the metal cup beside you since it's easy to scratch."

Do I draw the water from vapor?

"If it's Dry then you can practice using wet clothes placed on a hanger."

It's quite a scientific talk. Even though it's fantasy.

"That's right, Does Satou-san not use a cane? You can't use magic if you don't equip a cane."

What! There's such restriction.
Come to think of it, the magicians from before did have it, the life magic user was also using a cane.
Wait, how about that soldier? And the priestess didn't have one too.

"Do you mean Parion priestess? If so then they have holy mark in place of a cane. The soldier probably had other kind invocation tools or maybe a backup short cane?"
"Nadi-san, what is invocation tool? Is it different from a cane?"

"Invocation tool is something like ring or the likes of accessory, functioning like a cane, it's an item used to assist the activation of magic. The effect is lower than a cane, but it's expensive so there are few magicians who have one. Although for a job like magic swordsman where it's not possible to use a cane then it's a necessity."

As expected of the live Wiki. The one woman encyclopedia, Nadi-san.

Cane huh... There are various type of magic wand in the Storage. But the effect is too strong, it's scary. If possible, I'd like to practice with cheap things first.
But the magic shops in the town center won't be in operation for a while, I

wonder where I could get one?

"Nadi-san, Do you know anywhere I can buy a short cane?"
"Then the magic shop in the central... But as expected, it's closed because of yesterday, right? I think you can buy one from the alchemy shop in the west town."

I make a note of the way to the alchemist shop from Nadi-san.
Then after telling me the important points to note in the west area, Nadi-san went back to her work.

Now that it's lunch time in the open terrace, the customers have increased.

◇

I finished reading the introductory book just as I finished eating pasta for lunch.
...Why is this fantasy town very peculiar about taste!

10 minutes after I've entered the western area, the content of the dummy purse I've hanged on my waist is gone. The bottom of the purse is cut and the content is no more, though there were only pennies inside.

From looking at the log, it was not a pickpocket. It's really a game-like function.

I've passed through the area where they're selling daily necessities, and suspicious looking shops began to increase in number. Sexy women and evil looking old men can be seen wandering around.

There's a square in the center of the west area. The alchemy shop is further ahead.
Street stalls are lined up in the square, selling birds, cattle and the like competing with each other.

On the entrance of the square, a merchant is announcing something about slave market. It seems that it'll be open for 3 days from tomorrow night.

When I look at it carefully there are boys and girls with slave collars on their neck standing in line with cattle. Half of them seems to be hurt. Every one of those slaves have dead eyes. The cattle look healthier than them.
I had the urge to buy them all, but it's only for self-satisfaction so I stopped.
It's not the end even after they're released after all. ...Isn't this just an excuse?

Coming out of the square, brothels lined the streetside. I subtly feel like this is a period drama.
Still, lewd professional older woman are the best, right? Rather than an unwilling slave, a pro well versed in sexual culture is better.
Tonight, let's go to a shop with beautiful older women! I wonder if there are cabaret? I'd love to have a lewd conversation over a bubble bath but...

The main topic has been grandly derailed.
The alchemy shop seems to be located in the middle of this brothel street.
There's probably a high demand for drugs~

I wonder if it's thanks to Nadi-san's advice of only walking on the center of the road, I've arrived at the alchemy shop without being dragged to an alleyway. No wait, there was that pickpocket so it wasn't entirely safe...

"Good afternoon. Are you open for business?"

There's a dwarf on the counter inside the shop. Let me say this, it's not cute at all. It's a small old man about 1 meter tall. Is he a gnome? Or a hobbit? The AR indicate that he's of a fairy race. When I look better the "Earth Fairy (Gnome)" indication come up.

"If you're window-shopping, Go away."

Aw, how cold.
...This isn't a pun okay?
<TLN: Not sure where's the pun, my moonrune isn't advanced enough for this, I guess it's the 冷?>

"I'd like to buy a short cane, do you have any in stock?"

"Spell-user eh? There are cheap, expensive, and really expensive one, which one do you want?"

So rough~

"Please show me the cheap and the expensive one."

The shopkeeper take a wooden and a copper short canes out. The short canes look like something a certain famous British boy had, it's a simple wand. If you don't understand, then please imagine an orchestra conductor's baton but a bit thicker.
I stare at each of the canes and their performances are displayed on the AR. The wooden one has [Magic Activation Support + 3][Magic Effect Expansion -2], and 2 big copper coins market price, then the copper one beside it has [Magic Activation Support +3],[Magic Focus Support + 2],[Magic Effect

Expansion +2], with 3 silver coins quoted as the market price.
To be frank, even if I can see the performance I don't understand where the difference is.

The copper cane seems to have better performance, but the wooden one looks something that a magician would have, so I buy that one.

The shopkeeper looks displeased since I choose the cheaper one.

I might as well buy some medicines here.
That's right, if you're talking about alchemy then it's potion.

"Are there manual and tools for compounding?"

The shopkeeper grins while laughing. He probably think that I'm an easy mark.

[Introductory Book for Medicine Compounding, Practical Writing],[Book of Poison and Antidote][Book of Illness and Treatment], 5 compound tools set with extravagance cases, medicinal plant harvesting set tools, and chemical mixtures for beginner set. "These are all!" So he said after piling them all up.

...Hmm? Am I being tested?
The magic imbuing tools have a [Magic Imbuing Type Fake] status. The others are genuine.

"Is there no other one for this magic imbuing tool? It's not to my liking."

I openly point out the fake. It's how an adult interact.

"Fumu, it's a tool used to nitpick amateur who doesn't understand a thing."

He somehow looks happy. It's not only reflected on his face but the atmosphere has also softened a bit.

This time he takes out 3 imbuing tools.

One is decorated with high-class looking ornament, another is a tool that looks like it has been used a lot, and the last one is a cheap-looking and obviously fake tool. The high class one is especially equipped with magic, when I hold it up and move my hand, it emit a weak green light. It goes without saying that the expensive one is a fake.

"Then, I choose this one."

Of course I picked the well used one.

The market price is 15 gold coins eh. At any rate, does a beginner spell-user who comes to buy a cheap short cane look like someone who has money?

"I see, so you choose that one... If you have this one, then you won't need another, beside raw materials, even after you've become a veteran alchemist.

"How much is it?"

"10 gold coins."

Eh, isn't it much cheaper than the market price?
The shopkeeper grins when he see my face.

"Just as I thought, you have the appraisal skill."

The shopkeeper looks proud with his guess. I don't have such a skill.

>[Appraisal Skill Acquired]

Let's not argue back...

"Is it really okay with 10 gold coins?"
"Yeah, I'm saved if someone as capable as you studies alchemy."

When I think about it, isn't this thanks to haggling skill?

I pay the price and receive the books among other things. As one expect, my bag doesn't fit.
I decided to return to the hotel while holding the books in both hands.
I leave the shop after thanking the shopkeeper.

The things I need to do increase again.
I will learn alchemy after I've learned life magic!

2-3. The Chant, the Soldier and the Noisy Afternoon

Satou's here. Waving the short cane, rather than a magician I feel like a conductor.

Conductor skill doesn't appear. I'm a bit disappointed Satou.

The harem flag seems to be still so far away.

◇

After I returned to the hotel, I put away the alchemy sets.

I wanted to put it inside the <<Thirty Holding Bag>>, but from what I've heard from Nadi-san during the tour, the item was popular for the wealthy back in the era of the ancestor king Yamato, however, nowadays it's only attainable for the army, higher-ranking nobles, or a very prosperous merchant.

Since it's like that, I can't use it casually. It's not a problem if some thieves caught their eyes on it, but if it was a noble then it could become impossible to continue touring this city.

Following the instruction from Nadi-san yesterday, I fill a bucket full of water from the Hell Water Jug. I dip a cloth to the water and squeeze it. I take out a pot I bought yesterday and put the cloth there.

All right, preparation complete!

It's time for the chant for Dry!

"Lu lula la li lu... la?"

Even though I can read the word, I can't pronounce it! Do I need to read 100 character in one minute fast?

What kind of impossible game is this?

Then, I continued to practice chanting while feeling discouraged but I wasn't able to in the end. Cloth will get dry even if I don't use magic but I'm not happy about this at all.

"Okay! Let's ask for some help!!"

I get up clenching my hand!
When in trouble it's Nadi-san! Let's ask for some advices from Nadi-san.

"Nadiemo~n, please help me~."

Even while feeling like clinging to a straw, I'm heading to the Worker's Guild.

...But unfortunately, Nadi-san is absent.

◇

Since Nadi-san doesn't come back even until evening, I'm going to the bookstore in the central district. There should be other books about Life magic beside the ones I bought.

On the way there, I was called to the clothing store. Apparently, my order has

been completed early.

I wonder if the shopkeeper remember when I said that I didn't have change of clothes, so he hurried the order.

Let's receive it after that much trouble.

"It really suits you well."
"Yes, you look like a heir of a big company or a noble."

The shopkeeper and his wife praise me highly.

To confirm the size I take a pose in front of a full-length floor mirror.
However isn't this better than the sample back then? No, it's not a self-praise.

"Indeed, and it's better than the sample."
"That's right! Since it's a rush order, I asked a different tailor than the usual, but this fine lines and sewing are well done, truly splendid! Really~ thanks to the customer, I found a nice tailor."

How do I say it, I feel like apologizing.
After this much, let's just wrap my cloth earlier and wear this new one now.

◇

When I get to the gate I was asked to present the ID card. According to the gate soldier, it seems that some thieves got in after the disturbance, so it's now required to present your identification.

In the plaza, most stores along the main road are open. Because most of the

fight happened in front of the castle gate, beside few unlucky shops most are unscathed.

I bought tea leaves in a specialist shop facing the plaza shown by Nadi-san yesterday, I also bought some spices from a spice shop.

On the luxury food store I bought rice, miso, soy sauce. Like I said, why is this fantasy-(abbreviated)?

In front of a tavern in the plaza, a bard is singing a poem about the yesterday's demon and the knights with a full sense of reality.

...Isn't the mysterious silver mask a bastard child of the earl? Such songs are sung. The mask was actually tin but it has been promoted to silver.

Since I relatively enjoyed it, I gave him a silver coin. ...I was a bit ashamed though!

How many detours could it be just to go to a bookstore.

◇

"Satou-san, thank you very much for yesterday!"

Semone-san greets me with smile inside the bookstore. Apparently, today is her turn to look after the store.

"Hello Semone-san. How is the old man's condition?"

"Yes, he was healed with magic, but since he's of age, my grandmother is

watching after him to rest for 2-3 days."

Old man, you've got a good grandchild, I'm envious.

I'm gossiping some miscellaneous things to cushion for the real talk.

"You're searching for books regarding the way to practice chanting of life magic?"

"Yes, I was able to understand the explanation on the book I bought before, but I'm struggling to actually chant it..."

"Umm, Satou-san, Life magic skill is relatively easy to remember, but normally you'd need 3-5 years of training to master it. Moreover, even with that much training, 80% people usually end up in failure."

But I got the skill after receiving the life magic once? It's a cheat after all...

"Umm, even if you already have Life magic skill from the beginning, people who can remember the chants are..."

Let's hear it since I have nothing to lose anyway.

"A person who has a gift? Right, There are people who come from long heritage of magician family having magic skill right from birth, but a person like that usually has family members who can use magic..."

There is no need to learn from textbooks... is what she wanted to say, eh.

It can't be helped, I'm just gonna buy vocal training and acting related books.

Let's start improving my flow of speech.

◇

The magic shop facing the main street is covered with something that looks like a tarpaulin. It's closed just as I thought.

"Hello, nimble onii-san."

Turning my head, there, a girl wearing a plain yet elegant one piece tilts her body forward while looking at me with upturned eyes. With a slender body and long straight bob hair, she's a charmingly beautiful girl.

"Hello soldier-san, you're wearing a lovely dress today."

>[Lip Service Skill Acquired]

Please don't interrupt my talk...

"Ehehe~, since we seldom have rest, there aren't many chances to wear this~"

"About yesterday, have your bone fractures healed?"

"Yes! I want to say that, but the place where it break still occasionally hurt so I thought of going to the temple."

Just to make sure, she's the soldier I saved from a tree yesterday.

"Can you not heal yourself?"

"There is no healing method in wind magic you know."

I see, each element has their own forte.

"Ah~ Zena is boy hunting~~!!"
"Oh, it's true, Putting aside the face, he's well dressed, furthermore, he's younger! You're good, Zena."

"You girls, please don't make fun of her. Even though she's a late bloomer, that girl works hard, let's just watch over her warmly."

I wonder if they're soldier-san's friend, some noisy girls are standing in front of a shop's entrance while whispering to each other closely. There's a subtle insult mixed in oi.
Soldier-san's name is Zena eh, it's a good nutritious sounding name.

Zena-san is opening and closing her mouth silently with a red face. This kind of reaction is cute~

"Y, you're mistaken. I'm just thanking him for saving me yesterday."

The three girls harden a bit after hearing that.

"By saving you, don't tell me!!"
"That silver masked hero-sama?!"
"It can't be! He was brandishing a sledgehammer and a two-handed axe together you know? This delicate looking boy can't possibly do that."

"No… that's not it."
Zena-san's word doesn't reach the three girls.

"But isn't his height match?"
"Isn't the color of the hair different? That gentleman was blond."
"And he's not using a mask."

"Mou, please hear me!"
Zena-san shouts with her whole body!
The three girls finally pay her an attention.

"This man carried me who wasn't able to move due to injury to the relief station yesterday!"

"Ah, you mean that kind of [[helped me]]."
"But then, that's a golden opportunity in a way!"
"Don't liken her with you, Zena doesn't have such resourcefulness in her."

Yep, it's noisy. This is for Zena-san to meddle with. The three of them feel like they're cheering for her with no malice or sarcasm, they probably cherish her.
I wonder if it's a good time to interrupt them.

"Pleased to meet you, I'm Satou, a peddler. I'm planning to stay in this city for a while, pleased to make your acquaintance."

"Onii-san, you're really not Zena-cchi's boyfriend?"

"I just met her yesterday. Furthermore, I only knew her name after everyone here called her such."

"But but, for Zena to wear a skirt and go on a date!"
"It is not a date." (Zena) <TLN: Since there are sometimes nuance's words impossible to translate in English to indicate who the speaker is in Japanese, I'm just going to do this every time I feel it's ambiguous. Although it's not actually needed here because of the paragraph below.>
"But you never wore a skirt, even on holidays before."

Zena-san and the three girls who looks like the same age as her are lively exchanging words.

"I'd love for you to go on a date with Zena-san. This girl, even with her age, never takes a walk with an opposite sex, let alone a boyfriend."
"Yep, even if she's a fallen noble with no gold or status, she's a good girl. She's flat-chested but she's an adept wind user with promising future as a soldier."

The remaining two also recommend Zena-san.
I like her personality. In five years, after she becomes a bit well-rounded, I'd like to make an advance~
Zena-san stop her quarrel and goes back here.

"We're not fallen!! My little brother properly inherited the rank. Although it's true that we don't have gold or status in government..."

So Zena-san is a lower noble.
...She didn't object about the flat-chest.

"Let's stop playing around with Zena-san and go back to the castle. If we're late for the shift, the commander's special training awaits."

"La~ter~ then, Zena-cchi. Let's hear about various things thoroughly later~"
"Zena, push through with sex appeal and defenselessness! Show your guts!"

The three girls reluctantly return to the castle.
Zena-san is relieved while looking a bit ashamed.

Hmm? One girl went back here in a trot and gave Zena-san something.
Zena-san initially has a blank look, but after she understand what the handed over thing is, her face turn bright red. Probably expecting this reaction, the girl is going back to her friends while saying "Good luck~".

Zena-san secretly puts the thing she got in her pocket, and I don't intend to pursue it.
Because I'm an adult, yep.

2-4. The Afternoon Date with Soldier-san

Satou's here. Rather than a hero, I want to be a magician.

Chanting (aka DTM), such impossible game broke my heart.

I was healed a bit after the girl's talk with Zena-san and her friends.

◇

"I'm sorry for all the fuss. They're not bad girls, it's just that it was unusual that I'm with a man..."

She's coming with upturned eyes. It doesn't feel mischievous like in the beginning, this time it really looks timid.

"They look like fun people. I don't particularly dislike it."

"I'm happy if you think that way. That remind me, you looked troubled in front of the magic shop earlier, is something the matter?"

"Yes, I hit a roadblock in my magic chanting training. I was wondering if they have books concerning chanting practices, but as you see they're closed."

"Satou-san, you're, ummm is it fine to call you Satou-san?"

"Of course it's' fine."
I'm already calling you Zena-san without permission.

"Is Satou-san not only a nimble peddler but also a magician in training? That remind me, today you're not wearing gaudy clothes~, I think this one match you better."

So fixated on nimble part, this person is.

"I want to be able to use Life magic so I'm training on it, but I just can't get the chanting part right..."

"Let's see, for wind magic, people usually start with ■■■■ but if they tries to forcefully chant it, it usually come out like, lyu~lia la~lule li la~o. If it's just memorization, then most people can do it."

Zena-san is tilting her head with "I wonder how I should explain this"-look on her face.

"Rhythm. Yes, please try to slowly recite the chanting and remember the rhythm. Then while keeping the rhythm gradually increase the chanting speed so it become ■■■■!"

I see~, however, even if what she said isn't exactly a secret, isn't it still something that shouldn't be easily taught to other people?

"Rhythm huh... I understand, thank you very much professor. I'll practice hard in that direction."

"Yes, I'm happy that I can help you."

Zena-san smiles.

I should give her something as thanks.

◇

I've decided to go together with Zena-san halfway to the Parion temple in the west district.

"Speaking of which, how long did Zena-san practice to be able to use wind magic?"

"The real training was 3 years, but in hindsight, I've done various things during everyday life in preparation to become a magician~"

I wonder what kind of things? ...I hope it's nothing serious.

"In order to learn the history of magicians, from when I was a child, I was made to read aloud picture books for children, poem singing, practice to read lines smoothly, abdominal breathing... Toys for detecting the flow of magic. Even the children's plays were for the sake of training to become a magician."

Zena-san looks a bit gloomy for a second.

"It's not like I bear ill will toward my parents for raising me like that you know? Learning magic is fun anyway, and I have an objective to fly in the sky someday."

But there is no other road to choose from the beginning...

"Satou-san. Why does Satou-san want to learn life magic? Is it because it's useful for business?"

"No, since there is no bath in the inn, I was thinking if I have magic then I wouldn't have to take a bath outside..."

Ah, she's amazed.
She looks me in the eyes directly, and bursts a laughter.
Is it that interesting?

"Ahahahaha! Th, this is the first time I've seen a person who has such reason for wanting to become a magician."

Seemingly hitting the spot, Zena-san's laughter doesn't stop.

"Is it that strange?"

I think that it's relatively proper reason though. Don't you want to make inconvenient thing easier?

"It is strange!"

An immediate answer.

"Because if you have the drive and the fund to learn life magic, isn't it faster to just build a bath in your house? And you can just buy slaves for the job of boiling the bath."

It's like that huh~

I will do things I could do myself!　I'd like to think like that, but even over here, it's normal to hire people to work, since the labor costs seems to be cheap.

◇

"Mister, please buy some flowers."

When we got to the west street, a little girl carrying a small knitted bag filled with flowers immediately stops us.
The little girl stops while holding out a flower. I've catch sights on her various time before but this is the first time she calls out to me.
I wonder if people accompanied by woman are easier sells?
She's well thought out even though she's just a little girl.

"Okay, how much is it?"
"A penny for a bundle."

I receive the flowers in exchange for a penny. The little girl happily thank me and go toward the next customer candidate.
I present the flower to Zena-san.
Zena-san looks surprised.
No well, there is no other choice than this isn't it?

"Umm, is it fine to take it?"
"Yes, I'd be troubled if you don't receive it."

Since I can't throw it away.

Zena-san bites her lip while looking very happy.
Huh? Is it something to be so happy about?

...Well, I guess it's fine as long as she's pleased.

"That's right, Satou-san. Do you have any business after this?"
"No, after chanting practice I have noting in particular "

...There's alchemy, but I can do that anytime.

"Th, then, why don't we go to the street stalls on the way to the temple?"
"Yes, I'm fine with that. If possible, I'd like you to tell me the specialties of this town."

Zena-san probably never had experience of inviting someone herself, her face turns bright red halfway during the suggestion. Since it's just me, you don't have to be so tense you're fumbling words.
That remind me, when was it decided for me to go along until the temple?
She did me a favor regarding the secret of chanting, and I shouldn't complain since it's a date with a girl.

"Specialties is it? Leave it to me!"

She's full of confidence. I could expect something, maybe.

◇

"This is made from sweet potatoes, steamed sweet potatoes are filtered to

become jams which then kneaded together to make breads. It's a Seryuu city's specialty from long ago."

Something that looks like sweet potato kneaded for bread huh. Quite a subtle presence...

"These are deep fried bat wings spread with black miso."

It seems that Zena-san doesn't know the cuisine's name either. The shopkeeper who couldn't stand shutting his mouth any longer tells us. ...It's Dragon Wing Fries.
It seems to be foods said to bring luck.

"And then these are things I'm taught by Lilio. Ah, Lilio is the smallest girl from the trio earlier."

Putting aside the girl's name.

The thing that Zena-san recommends is ...light brown? ...I wonder what is it?

For the time being I bought two serving for two pennies from the stall's uncle seller.
I guzzle the brown liquid using the straw plugged into it handed by the uncle seller.
It's a starch syrup!

"Starch syrup huh. It's nostalgic~"
"You knew about it~"

She looks a bit disappointed. I should have been surprised ...I'm sorry.

"The starch syrup that I know is colorless and transparent, I didn't know what this was."
"Noble-sama, the colorless transparent syrups are high-class items made using expensive grains and sugars, this one is intended for commoners and uses sweet potatoes, gabo fruits and malts so it's light brown."

The uncle seller interrupted with overreaction.
Who's a noble? He didn't say it to Zena-san only.

"Mister, I am commoner you know. I got to drink the colorless and transparent syrup from an acquaintance long ago. I didn't know that it's a luxury."

I mean, it's 200 yen a pop on the festival.

Afterwards, we enjoy ourselves by going around various stalls while plodding the crowds. It's a good afternoon.

2-5. The Temple, the Beastkin Girls and the Stone Throwing Afternoon

Satou's here. "Every cloud has a silver lining", I'm contemplating such phrase.

The peaceful afternoon I enjoyed yesterday completely changed.

Well then, the afternoon series, troubles arc will begin...

◇

A little distance away from the street stalls, there's a Parion temple.
In the east street, there are only street stalls in the main street.

There are some people gathered in front of the temple.

"I wonder what happen?"
"Let's check it for a bit."

Zena-san rushes over there. Seeing this quick change of pace, she's really a soldier.

Zena-san asks what happen to the the big priestess' attendant from yesterday.
Zena-san is flapping her hand it around. She seems to be grateful about something.

I wonder what they're talking about?

When I got closer as I walked I only heard the latter half of the story.

By the way, the conversation that I've heard,

"...then how about the Garleon temple on the east street. The temple there also has military contact so medical treatment shouldn't be a problem. It's on east street but you're accompanied by a man so strange fellows probably won't approach you."
"Yes, even like this, I'm a magician soldier. I'd beat playboys who try to pick me up no matter how many of them come."

From Zena-san, it seem that the priestess are in the middle of meeting with envoys from the royal capital temple. Moreover, since the priestess are only able to use magic for healing injury, light poison and illness, we're forced to go to the other referred temple.

...He's just passing the buck!!

◇

In the end, we're going to the Garleon temple on the east street.

It's not like I'm dissatisfied you know?
Even if I got used to it, walking the European-style city together with a plainly cute girl like this, it's quite enjoyable!

Along the way, about 100 meter away, a public park is there.

I thought that it was just a lawn with weeds, but it's cut short and in the square, some old couples carrying baby are resting, and around 10 young

people are practicing martial arts.

"Zena-san, what kind of training is in military?"

I want to hear it somehow.

"That's right~, I think it's the same training as soldiers everywhere, but for magic soldiers it's concerning preservation of magic power. We take care to maintain the state where we can use magic at its best."

Variation in training huh?
Certainly, MP-less magicians are useless.

"Magic soldiers and magicians each assigned different roles in accordance with their element. I can only speak from the viewpoint of military, but except for fire element, we don't usually use other elements for attacking."

Certainly something like torturing by fire is certainly suitable for attack. But you can also use it to heat bath you know?

"As for my wind, it's used for protection from arrows, <<Wind Protection>>, defending a castle from castlebreaker hammer with (Air Cushion), or transmitting instruction with (Whisper), various useful things like those. If we use (Fly) then scouting will be easy, but the Earl doesn't have anyone who can use it."

That remind me, Zena-san's goal was to fly through the sky isn't it?

"If you manage to fly, then it'd be nice to have a date in the sky~"

I was joking, but Zena-san turns red to her neck and says "P, please leave it to me" while fumbling her words.

It's cute, but I'm worried if she's ever going to be deceived by a bad man~

◇

In the shades of the roadside trees several cats are curling around. Come to think of it, this is the first time I've seen wild cats since I come here.

"That cat is cute~."

Zena-san looks like she'll run there if left alone.
I'm of cat's faction too, that's why I can't let cats' afternoon nap to be disturbed!!
So I bring up this talk.

"That remind me, there are no wild dogs in this city."
"There's a rumor that wild dogs, if seen, will become meals for the people of the slum..."
"It's a lie, isn't it?"
"Yes, it's a lie.
But a rumor like that do exist, it seems that ripe gabo fruits eaten with dog are quite addicting. So, ever since that fruit began to be consumed, wild dogs disappeared."

Gabo fruits appear again. Have some restrain!

People catching sights of hunters going to the meat processing plant in the east street with their dog partners seems to be the root of that rumor.

◇

"Punishment for the demon's kin! Receive blessing by striking the demon with these holy stoooones!"

Halfway into the east street, we're hearing a faint voice verging on falsetto like it's coming from an old man. There are also voices of a lot of people.

On the square from the alley turn, there's a fat middle-aged man priest standing in an expensive looking pedestal.
With bloodshot eyes, bubbles fly from his mouth.

"O people with virtue! Do you remember the divine punishment also known as Star Fall from the other day!"
"""Oooo!"""
"""We remember!"""
"""Oooooo!"""

Isn't about half of the shouting people are faking it?

"Furthermore! FurtherMORE! Yesterday, the Earl's castle had been hit by an attack of the demon lord's executive!"
"""Oh Gods!"""
"""Please save us, hero-sama!!"""
"""Oooooo!"""

Shouting is a good way to relieve stress huh.

"This is a sign of the dimming of the god's divine protection! Acquire blessings! O people with virtue! Those who gain blessings will be protected from disaster!"
"""Priest-sama! Please save us!!"""
"""Oooooo!"""
"""Blessings!!!"""

Such cheap people.

"Acquires blessing! Do you understand people! Blessings!"
"""Blessings!!!"""
"""Oooooo!"""
"""Please teach us!"""

This town's people would be easily deceived by fraudulent calls or shady pyramid scheme.

"Look at those fellows!"

The fat priest point at the back of the square.

"Those fellows are demi-human, the washout of the demon, no, the kin of the demon lord! Give divine punishment to those fellows and receive blessings!"
"""Oooooo!"""
"""KILL!!!"""

Oi oi agitator.

"Wait! People of virtue! Murder is prohibited by the law of the kingdom. Wait!"
""""What should we do, priest-sama!!""""
""""KILL!!!""""
""""Oooooo!""""

There are a lot of people who are just clamoring.

"Killing is prohibited! With these holy stones hit the demon's kin and receive blessings."

""""Priest-sama!""""
""""Give us the stones~!""""
""Oooooo!""""

I look at the direction the fat priest points to. 3 beastkin girls are there.

"But it's not free! Receive the blessings using your own money!!"

""""Oooooo!""""
""""Blessings!!!""""

Dog, Cat, and Lizard beastkin girls are huddling together.

"The holy stones are 1 copper coin each! For this special occasion, you can get 6 stones for one big copper coin!"

Ah, the voices from the people stop. What a calculating populace~

"What's wrong! Pious men and women! There's a limit on these holy stones! Those who receive blessings are those who act fast!"

""""We'll buy it!""""
""""Please sell it to me!!!""""
""""Oooooo!""""

They sure are weak with limited edition.

"Buy it from my disciples here! Line up! If you don't properly line up, you won't get the blessings!"

""""Oooooo!""""
""""Line up!""""

Fat priest, did you just use mind manipulation magic?

People who have bought the holy stones unreservedly throw it at the beast girls. They don't hesitate there.

Eh~~~? Are you serious?

"I cannot watch this!"

Zena-san pushes her way through the crowds running to the fat priest's place. I was taken aback and late to respond.

""""Kill the demi-human!!""""

"""Oooooo!"""
"""Punishment for the demon kin!!!"""

The people are heating up and sporadically hit the beast kin girls with the stones.
The lizard girl are protecting the smaller dog and cat girls.

Now then, it's easy to interrupt this from the front, but if the same thing happen again later then there is no meaning to it.

Detailed information from the AR come up like usual when I look at the beast kin girls.

This is!

I quickly chew through the information I've found.
Then, it should be somewhere.

There!

I investigate the guy's information and is convinced.
With this, I should manage somehow!

I whip my gray brain cells to explore the best solution...

2-6. Arguments and the Extermination of the Hidden Evildoer Afternoon

Satou's here. "In any ages, agitators never disappear.", such phrase exist, but let alone in ages, even in different world they don't disappear.

Well then, let's settle this.

Adding another page to the history of Seryuu city...

◇

Staring at the 3 beast kin girls, I found the name of the master of the girls.

It's not the name of the fat priest.

Then, where is the master of the girls?

Thinking the possibilities, either the master is not here, or he can't go against the fat priest... or he's a partner of the fat priest.

Right now, since we can't find the information with just AR, I use the special ability of All Map Exploration.
I search the name of the master.

There, on the edge of the square. It's a small man with fox-like eyes, grinning at the commotion in the square while sitting atop of a wooden box.

I inspect the information displayed on the AR.

The small man's name is Uusu. 39 years old. His skills are [Fraud], [Persuasion] and [Intimidation]. Owned slaves are [Cat kin],[Dog kin], [Lizard kin]。
....Hmm? Do slaves only display their kin's type with no name?

No, those kind of things don't matter.
I need more information.
It's still not enough.

Affiliation [Seryu City, Lower Class Citizen]. Guild [Brown Rat].

This is it, guild [Brown Rat]. Begin Search!
Members are 52 people. Including the 10 people in this square. Excluding Uusu and the bodyguard-like big man behind him, 8 men are fake demonstrators in the square.
I mark all people, including the one not present in this place.

Now then, let's begin the action!

>[Inference Skill Acquired]
>[Behind the Scene Skill Acquired]

...But the beast kin girls are probably very shaken with those abuses. I had overlooked an important information. I can't turn back the time, but right now, if I delay the first step the result might be different...

◇

Zena-san arrives before the fat priest.

"Pleas stop this inhuman conduct!"
"What's this little girl! Are you an ally of the demon?"

Before one become aware, his followers have disappeared. Moreover, since he can't refute back, the agitators' butt in for him.

""""Allies of the demon are demons too!""""
""""Oooooo!""""

In the space of the time Zena-san gained, first I have to do something about the fakers in the crowd.

"Please do not be deceived! Does Zaikuon temple intend to break the law of the kingdom!"
"What's wrong with beating the demon with holy stones?"

What a disengaged conversation. No, the priest understand, he's just shifting the point.
I activate [Spy] and slip into the crowd. While moving through the crowd, I also activate [Evasion] and [Fighting].

""""Oooooo!""""
"That's right! Let's throw stones at that little girl!!!"
""""Oooooo!""""

Zena-san use <<Wind Protection>> not only to herself but also to defend the beast kin girls. As expected of a magic soldier of the army.

Now then, while they're still dumbfounded let's put this crowd into order. Even for Zena-san, if a lot people rush together it would be dangerous.

I move beside the (Brown Rat) man who's still trying to incite stone throwing. I wonder if it's the effect of the skill, I was able to choose what kind of attack to neutralize him, and even while being hidden to the surrounding doing it.
I neutralize the (Brown Rat) man with just one attack. And just like that, I throw him to the alley. Because time is precious, I don't have time to restrain him.

>[Abduction Skill Acquired]
>[Assassination Skill Acquired]

Abduction skill seems to be usable, I raise it to maximum. I don't take the Assassination skill. I won't take it you know?

In the center of the square, a priest with different clothing is helping Zena-san. It's a blue-collar worker handsome middle-aged man.

"Equating demi-human with demon, rather than Zaikuon temple, Isn't it just you who say such thing?"

"Hum, the philanthropist priest from the Garleon temple huh? If you like beasts that much then after this beating, use them as you like, from the front, the back, whichever."

Uwa, he's the worst sexual harasser. Zena-san is turning red... or not. Did she not understand the meaning. Par exellence.

"Kill the demi-human!"
""Oooooo!!""
"Punishment for the demon!"

I'll leave the dispute on the stage to Zena-san and her reinforcement, and proceed to exterminate the harmful pests (Brown Rat) here. I successfully knock 2, 3 people unconscious and leave them on a suitable alley. Sake bottles are falling around nearby but I don't have time to spare.

"Do you understand! If you keep fueling anxiety on people, it could end up in revolt! Zaikuon temple will be blamed as the mastermind behind it!"
"Foolish lizard who borrows the skin of dragon! Don't kill the demon you say? Aren't you the traitor here!"
"Kill the demon!!"
""Oooooo!""
"Maybe that little girl is a demon in disguise?!"

The extermination is half complete. The crowd's shouting has become considerably less too... There's a particular guy with an awfully loud voice. Though he doesn't seem to be a part of Brown Rat. Let's mark him for now. Let's get in contact after the extermination is complete.

"Everyone from the east street! Everyone else is also anxious just like you! But that's not an excuse to torture the weak like cowards!"
"Did you hear that everyone! Garleon temple deem you as evils! He said that everyone here, eager to receiving blessings, as evils!"

"Kill the demon!!"

""Oooooo!""
"You damn fake priest!"

Good, only 2 more remaining.
I bring them down and roll them to the alley.

Before I set up the stages with Uusu, I got into contact with the loud-voice-kun to prepare for the event.

>[Conspiracy Skill Acquired]

"Please stop this already. No matter how many of you throw the stones, I will prevent it!"
"You bastard, do you intend to interfere this holy conduct! Foolish one who goes against God!"

The fat priest shout to the point bubbles fly from his mouth, but people who support him are sparse. Even those voices are disappearing 1 by 1 now.

I tap on the shoulder of Uusu.

"It's your turn now."
"Wh, who are you bastard! Oi, Banze! Crush this bastard!"

While surprised, Uusu ordered the big man behind. But he fell into confusion when he look back and couldn't find the man from earlier.

"Banze? Where's that halfwit gone to!"
"That big man (Banze) has gone somewhere with a woman."

In truth, he's currently fainted in the alley though.
I twist the arm of Uusu and take him along up to the stage.

"Everyone, please disband here. If you keep this up, the army will really come! If you are anxious then go to the temple, I'll listen to your worries no matter how much!"
"You bastard, do you intend to interfere this holy conduct! Foolish one who goes against God!"
<TLN: Yes, he said the same exact things as earlier>

Aren't you both priests?
I throw Uusu in the middle of them.

"Oh, Uusu-dono! You bastard! What have you done to this pious person who provided the demi-human for this holy conduct! You apostate!"
"Zena-san, please use magic to isolate voices from outside for the slaves."

Before Uusu get up to command the slaves, Zena-san has completed the spell.

"Dog, Cat, Lizard! Beat these guys up!"
Since command didn't reach the slaves, they're tilting their necks looking puzzled.
For once, I pick up a holy stone (lol), and throw it at the solar plexus of the man. Oh, he faints in agony.

"Zena-san, thanks for waiting. Thank you for your hard work too, handsome middle-aged priest (the priest over there)-san. This guy is the ringleader."
"As expected of Satou-san. You're not just nimble!"
"Who are you"

Your praise vector is a bit strange, Zena-san.

"Zena-san, if you still have some magic left, could you cast a spell to make our voices heard throughout the square?"
"Okay! ■■■■ ■■■■ ■■■ ■■■ Whisper Wind."

I raise the fainted Uusu with both hand to make him visible.
I plan to use the handsome middle-aged priest as cover to make me look inconspicuous.
Wa, don't move priest-san.

"Everyone, can you see him? This man is the culprit! This man lent his slaves to this Zaikuon temple's priest, agitated your worries and sold common stones to steal your precious money!"

>[Condemnation Skill Acquired]

"'GIVE OUR MONEY BACK------!'"
An especially loud voice comes out from the crowd. Fueled by that voice, series of, "Give our money back", shouts begin.

"Furthermore, these guys have other goal! To gain small profit and to use the Zaikuon temple for their true purpose! They want to incite everyone's here and start a revolt on the Earl! They are actually worshipers of the demon!"

Scammer skill at its peak! orz.

The small profit part is probably true though. The remaining two were just something I made up.

In fact, even until now I don't understand the purpose of this man so I'm shaking his up to spit it out.

>[False Charge Skill Acquired]

If his purpose is to sell holy stones, even if 100 stones are sold, that's 4 silver coins. It does not match the price of 3 demi-human slaves. From Market skill's judgment, the three are worth for about 6 silver coins. If they had continued the throwing just before, the slaves would undoubtedly be dead. See? The calculation doesn't fit.

"'That guy is being manipulated by the demon from the shadow, is it.....!'" That guy, I did ask him to put the priest in disadvantageous position, but read the air. This could become another riot.

"I will deliver this man to the lord for attempted revolt. Fat priest (Zaikuon Temple), you were being deceived by this man isn't it?"

The priest's eyes are swimming.

"Ye, Yes, I was deceived. So he was a demon worshiper! I, I'm not in the wrong... noble-sama! I was deceived. That's why I don't have the slightest bit of revolting against the Earl..."
"Yeah, that would be right. Then please give the money back to the people. That will surely give you better treatment."

Of course, it's an empty promise. Scammer skill is scary. Words are coming out fluently...
The fat priest is unwillingly gives the disciples instruction to give the money back. Group of two or three people are leaving the square. Later, a quarrel

between people who didn't buy the stones and the disciples break out.

Kukukukuku.

Uusu who got his feet trampled down and can't move laughs creepily.
Did he go crazy, or does he have some kind of plan?
He wouldn't convince anyone with arguments full of holes. He looks like someone who loves to use violence anyway.

But, it was different than what I expected. Even while lying face down and completely unable to move, an attack from a swing of black hand came out.
I was able to dodge by a hairbreadth but the poison claws teared through the fat priest.

2-7. Demon Return

Satou's here. "I must pay attention to his arms", even after I murmured so, I completely forgot about it halfway through.

However, it's just an arm. Let's just crush it and end it soon.

◇

"What the heck is that arm?!"

The fat priest who got his internal organs torn by the sharp claw dies instantly.
And, Uusu who wields that poisonous claw looks like he doesn't understand what's happening....

"T, that arm!"
"From yesterday, isn't it?"

Zena-san nods.

"Do you know something?"
"It's the arm of the higher ranking demon who attacked the lord's castle yesterday."

Zena-san dutifully answered the handsome middle-aged priest's question.

...What kind of situation is this.

Uusu doesn't look like he's a demon from the beginning.
Then, he's probably a host of a demonic parasite, although I don't know the why or how.

Let's check Uusu's information once again.
...There, [Abnormal Status: Demonic Possession]. If only I saw it earlier!

Even though I have cheat, if I don't use it skillfully then it's meaningless... I should reflect on it.
The problem is how to defeat it.

"If I try to pull it out by force, that man is probably going to die, what should we do?"
"We don't have the leisure for such things, let's call for reinforcement immediately!"
"I will try to confine it! ■■■■ ■■■■■ ■■ ■■■■■■..."

The priest's chant is too long.

"Zena-san, please call for reinforcement. It's probably the fastest to call the central with the help of wind magic."

For now, let's keep Zena-san in the safe zone.
After hesitating for a bit, Zena-san runs while saying "I'll be back asap".

The poisonous claw tried to attack here, but Uusu couldn't get up so it didn't reach.

The arm grow from the area around the chest of Uusu.

In the beginning, the arm was about 1 meter long but it continues to grow longer little by little.

Is it growing?

A stone thrown from the crowd hit the side of the head of Uusu. It hit with quite a sound.
This time, an arrow flying from behind pierces through Uusu's neck. When I was dumbfounded, another three arrows hit in a row.
When I look behind, two hunters appear from the shadow.

"...We bring down the prey when we are presented with the chance to."

Since when were you guys here.

However, it's a world which treats life cheaply. For the time being, we're saved without any intervention from me. I may become a peace-loving idiot.

Uusu who should've been dead, get up with straight posture and no bent joint, looking like a Kyonshii (Chinese vampire). From that body, black light(?) emerges.

"You worms, for destroying this annoying host's brain. I thank you."

...Demon-kun, I like you better when you didn't talk.

"....■■■■ ■■■■■ <<Cirlce of Anti-Evil>>!"
"How impertinent. I laugh."

The demon is looking uninterested, the handsome middle-aged priest invokes

the spell which seal the hand of the demon with light magic square.

Even though the demon snickers at it, the magic square persist.

"Gunununu. This isn't a magic that should have been able to be used by human!　I miscalculate"

The handsome middle-aged priest has begin casting for another spell.
The hunters withdraw, knowing that it's not an opponent that could be defeated with arrows.

The people who remain in this square are just me, the handsome middle-aged priest, and the three beast kin girls.
Probably interested with the situation, some people are peeking from the shadow of rooftops around the square.

Everyone sure can run fast~
The three beast kin daughters are chained together to a stake stuck in the square, so they can't run away.

For now, let's get the beastkin daughters out of harm way. I shouldn't lose the real reason of why I got into trouble with the fat priest in the first place.

Tearing off the chains would be too conspicuous, so I pull out the stake.
Since I didn't look like I use too much force, even if someone saw it they would think that the ground is loose.

"It's dangerous here, quickly get away. Since I can't take off the chain, go hide behind the shadow of a sturdy building together."
"Impossible, nyesu"

<TLN: Nyaa+Desu>

The cat girl timidly speaks while occasionally chokes on her words. It seems that Uusu ordered them to "Don't move away from this place", and if they oppose it the collar will put them to death... This is troublesome.

I can't wait for the army to arrive here. Their war potential has fallen from yesterday, and there is not enough road space to bring the cannon here. There is no room for cavalries either. The magicians' number has also decreased sharply.
If it like this, if I play around the victims will only increase. I don't want Zena-san and the three beastkin girls to die here.

Let's disguise into masked hero, and finish the demon when the handsome middle-aged priest cast his holy magic.

I transformed(lol) before the demon begin to do something troublesome.

"That bastard over there. You worm dare to ignore me, I am angry!"

I face the arm demon. The AR indication has changed from Uusu to Demon kin. On the space for the name, phonetic symbols lined up instead of normal letters.
Has Uusu been swallowed completely?
Checking the AR while keeping the demon in sight, the beast kin girls status has also changed to [Master : none].

"You bastard, who are you? I am uncomfortable."

"A confirmation for now, you're not Uusu but a demon right?"

"Wa, wait!　I am Uusu! Please take off this arm, I don't want to die! Please help!!"

Huh? Is his consciousness intact?
When I think of that for a moment, the arm demon [launches] three poisonous nails.

"Mufufufufu~. Humans always react this way~ I am thrilled."

I block the poisonous nails with the stake in the nick of time. The stake changes color and crumbles in a moment.

"Unununu, you blocked that, I am astonished!"

I pick up a holy stone on the ground. Should I weaken him with this?

The man's jaw start to transform to look like a wolf.
Before the transformation complete, I throw the stone at him but it was blocked with the poisonous claw.

"Fushurururu~. It's easier to talk now. I am excited ♪"

Here, it's painful to hear your way of speaking though.

"■■■ <<Sacred Javelin>>."

Spear of light formed from thin air flies from the handsome middle-aged priest.

"I ridicule."

The arm demon roars, wall of darkness erupts and divert the course of the light spear.
As I thought, he's not only able to talk easier but also able to use magic now.

"Everyone, please quickly get away from this square! Attack magic is incoming!!!"

I desperately raise my voice to tell the people who are peeking the square!

>[Loudspeaker Skill Acquired]

"All the panic, fear, anxiety, prejudice, arrogance since earlier are truly splendid! I am satisfied."

I'm going to be fine, but at this rate, the beastkin girls are going to die if left alone.
An especially large long roar comes out of the arm demon.

"Therefore, let this place become *moi* nesting ground. Aren't you happy? I service!"

Should I carry the beastkin girls on my shoulder and run? It can't be helped if I attract attention.
Consequently, while having such needless worry, the situation is changing rapidly.

The ground below is warping like special effects from Showa era shows.
Even though the ground is hard, it's flashing dark violet light, warping,

twisting, stretching... and the flash [Darken].

◇

When the light settles, I was in a place that look like a cave. Beside the ground which is unchanged, everything else look like bare rocks. In the space of around 10 Meter in radius, I see an exit on one of the wall.
I can somehow see it thanks to the faint purple light coming from the floor.

People who are here include me, the still-chained dog and cat girl I carry in my arms and the lizard girl on my shoulder.

The handsome middle-aged priest and the arm demon who were nearby before, aren't here.

"Welcome to *moi* Labyritnth. It still doesn't have name, and monsters are being created right now, you can thank *moi* for it. I am diligent!"

The arm demon's voice are coming from somewhere. It doesn't seem like telepathy.
The dog girl is pointing at the corner of the ceiling. It seems that the voice is coming from the air hole there.

"For the sake of *moi* complete revival, experience fear at your heart's content. Kill each other! Snatch everything. I encourage!"

After pausing for a bit, the arm demon continues.

"The souls of those who resigns are thin, I hate."

"Therefore, every room are connected to the exit and *moi* room. I am fair."

"I am expecting the despair that come after the hope. Strive, fodders! I encourage!"

...I see.
This is like the forced event [Escape from the Labyrinth Mission] in video game. Outbreak! That kind of feeling.
Phew.

>Title [Labyrinth Explorer] Acquired

2-8. The Labyrinth of Demon (1)

Satou's here. While thinking that it's going to be city adventure, suddenly it become dungeon attack, I am unable to follow the situation, Satou.

The labyrinth was easily created but I wonder if the exit is on the downtown?

An adventure guild could probably be established after some years.

◇

When I'm confirming the map, [Labyrinth of Demon, Bottom Layer], is displayed, the passage ways are not displayed.
...It's not going to be that convenient, is it?

The beastkin girls look anxious.
First of all, let's take care it.

"I'm Satou. A peddler"

"Cat nyesu"
"Dog nanodefu"
"Lizard"
The cat and dog girl choked on their words. While scraping sound can be heard halfway through the lizard girl's words.

It's not only Uusu who did it, even their master from before called them like that. The cat and the dog girls were slaves from birth but the lizard girl wasn't and she seemed to had have a name before becoming a slave. However, it's a long name mixed with incorrigible sound difficult to pronounce.

In the end, since they asked me to give them name that's easy to call, I name them "Pochi","Tama", and "Liza". Don't treat them like pets! You may be

angry like that, but I don't have the confidence to remember them right with normal names so please forgive me, at least until we get out of this labyrinth. Liza is not from Lizard but two words cut from her real name.

Now then, before we begin the escape, let's cure the beastkin girls first.
I take out cloths, a water bottle, and ointments from the bag. The ointments are sample products from the alchemy set. Since it's just a sample, I don't have a lot but it's probably sufficient.

"Disinfect your wounds with this cloths soaked with water from this bottle. After that smear the ointment to the wound and coil it with the cloth. Don't use the cloth you used for the disinfection okay?"

The beastkin girls are perplexed when I hand them over new cloths.
They're probably bewildered to be spoken not in commanding words for the first time, yeah. I feel like I'm back to nursing my smaller relatives back in the days.

"What's wrong? I will face the other way while you girls are treating your wounds, so don't worry."

Apparently it's not because they're embarrassed, but because they rarely ever got good cloth and ointment as slaves.

"Thank you, nanodesu. You don't have to face the other way nanodesu."
"Beautiful cloth. I'm happy~."
"Since the master is dead, we cannot possibly pay you back. It's better to put aside water and medical treatment until after we get out of the labyrinth... um, well... isn't it..."

The incomprehensible words are converted to proper sentences in the brain.
It's good isn't it?

Pochi and Tama untie the string that tied the simple clothes they were wearing and undress without hesitation to begin treating their wounds.
Liza-san seems to be the thoughtful type and hesitate a little, but I [Order] her

not to mind so she also begin the treatment.

When their treatments are finished, I distribute the baked sweets to the three. I give them 3 palm-sized sweets each. It should be enough for now. The sweets are remainder from the time when I went to various stalls with Zena-san. It's not bitten leftovers though.

Pochi drools all over her face, everyone stare at the sweets, but no one is eating.

"There are no poison in it, so eat it well."

Are they not allowed to eat without orders? Slaves
sure are oppressed~ Pochi chokes on the food so I pass her the water bottle.

"I won't take it away, eat it slowly."

I feel like a baby-sitter for a bit...

◇

I confirm the map once again. It still only displays this room.
...Is the magic ineffective, or is it dispelled...

I open the menu and use the [All Map Exploration] magic. Even though this particular magic is easily usable~.
<TLN: He's talking about how he's unable to use other magic lol>

The whole picture of [Labyrinth of Demon] is displayed. Easy mode is too good!

This looks like an ant's nest, rather than a labyrinth.
The passage from here to the next room is diverged like a tree's root, from that room to the other the passages diverge again like before. In labyrinth-like fashion, there are also secret intertwined secret passage ways that connect

rooms.

Searching through the map, there are 109 humans here. In which 7 are demi-human. The remaining 102 are human kins with around a quarter of them being slaves.

The handsome middle-aged Garleon priest is in a considerable remote position. If we can meet up with him, it'd be already near the exit huh? I personally don't want him to end up dead, being a capable person he is, though he probably won't die easily so I will consider it lucky if we can meet him.

I tried searching for the arm demon but I couldn't find him. There's a particular room located in the deepest part, he's probably there...
If I carelessly beat him, the labyrinth may collapse, let's leave him alone for now.

The enemies are around level 10-20 of insect monsters. There were around 20 when I first searched, but now, there are more than 100. Additionally, snake and frog monsters appear too.

Let's give the beastkin girls some weapons since it could be bad if we were sandwiched between the passage.
Okay, let's look for some hidden suitable location in the passage to take some spear and sword from the storage.

After deciding what to do, I tried to go toward the passage but I was stopped by the beastkin girls in a hurry.

"Please don't throw me away! I will do anything!"
"Please don't leave me behind!"
"Mister, I don't mind being a sacrifice but please take me along. Please."

They desperately tried to stop me. Still no one tried to pull my clothes, is it because their experience as slaves or training?

"Don't worry. I was just going to see the state of the passage. I won't abandon you, so please be at ease."

I'm talking as gently as possible. Though I don't think it will fully relieve them, it's better than not saying anything.
After the three girls finished eating, I take out out daggers and magic gun from the bag and equip them (to himself and the girls).

Only Liza who has combat related skill, [Spear]. Since I can't exactly take a spear out of the bag, I take out another dagger and give it to Liza. Probably because it's uncommon for slaves to have weapon, she hesitated but I pushed it to her.

I take the vanguard position, Liza is responsible for surprise attack from the back. Liza wanted to do the battle by herself but I asked her to be on the rear. Since I have radar, there is no possibility of surprise attack, but I'm giving her the role to ease the girls' uneasiness a little.

The order is me, Tama, Pochi, and Liza. I [Order] them with a strong tone to not participate in battle. Since their level are only around 2-3, if they carelessly receive an attack they could die.

It's an escort mission for real.

◇

The floor on the passages become that of rocks. Since there aren't any paved stones that emit light anymore, it's dark. The fortunate thing? There are several shining stone pillars every few meters so, even though it looks eerie, at least we are able to walk.
The stone pillar is about a waist's height. Since the light only reach around our breast's area, the ceiling is pitch dark, it's unpleasant.

It was probably made so to fuel anxiety.

Such a detestable demon-like thing to do.

When someone got into a room the passages will turn pitch black to encage them inside, there are probably thing like that prepared.

"Tama, if you see anything in the passage ahead, tell me in low voice. Pochi, if you smell or hear anything strange, tell me about it. Liza, please be wary of the back. But please don't focus all your attention on the rear and be late to follow us."
""""Yes""""

I'm still a bit uneasy, but it's a good reply.

>[Leadership Skill Acquired]
>[Formation Skill Acquired]

Sign of the enemies are detected in the radar. It's quite a bit far ahead.

"I can smell blood from the other side of the passage, nanodesu."

Pochi said that.
It's a straight line from here, but it's still 500 meter away.

I praise Pochi while petting her head. This treatment is like what you're doing to a pet, but her tail flails around with pitter-patter, she's probably happy about it.

I investigate the enemy while walking closer. Level is 20, no special ability. Method of attack is ramming and biting. It seems that there are only one monster in the next room.

I just remember something and take a note of the current stat and abilites of the three, since they also have experience value column, I draw a plan... This really feels like a game.

Since the experience values are displayed as percentage, I don't know the

concrete number, but it's still really convenient when gaining levels. Since I can't see the experience value of other person in the map, I wonder if this is restricted to party members? Or are there other conditions to follow?

I saw the light leaking from the room.

I instruct the three to wait and peek at the room. The insect-shaped enemy is single-mindedly eating [Something], paying no attention here. Like I said... I'm weak against gore you know.

I wait until the chewing sound stop, then shoot it with the magic gun.
The single shot blows through the hind leg's joint. The broken parts flies.

I'm not giving the huge cricket any room for counterattack, killing it in rapid-fire.

Good grief, why is this giant cricket appear in anywhere but a desert...
<TLN: Is this a reference to Haruhi?>

"Amazing, nanodesu."
"Amazing."
"Mister, are you a magician?"

Pochi and Tama are simply in high spirits, but Liza is having a question.

"This is a magic weapon you know. Don't tell this to anyone!"

I gave the warning while grinning badly. I didn't forget to pose with the magic gun.
Pochi and Liza nodded seriously, but Tama said "Ay", while looking so happy. I'm going to give another warning once we get out of the labyrinth.

The chain on the collar is obstructive. Tama is full with just holding the chain on her hand.
That's right, I can cut it with this.

I call Liza and ask her to pull the chain horizontally, then I shoot it with the magic gun.
I did the same thing to Tama and Pochi... but they were probably afraid, their ears were flat down.
I put the chain in the bag and give it to Pochi to hold.

Since the torn foot from the giant cricket was 2 meter long, I make an impromptu spear out of it.
I raised the weapon creation skill to level 1 first.

The nail parts on the toe are loose, so I fix it in place with a piece of wood and a leather strap. Since green fluids are oozing from the cut part, I wrap it with the used cloths from the treatment earlier.

When I'm going to give Liza the cricket spear... She is currently cutting the joint section of the cricket's head, working on something.

Is she hungry?

"Liza, if you eat that kind of thing, you'll have a stomachache."
"Y, You're mistaken. Since it's a monster, it should have a magic core inside, so I'm retrieving it..."

Magic core?

>Title [Insect Slayer] Acquired

2-9. Labyrinth of Demon (2)

Satou's here. I've given up on the idea that this is a dream, but now I'm thinking that this might not be a reality but inside a game instead, I'm having such doubt after being bewildered. If it's like that I would have preferred the world of eroge instead, Satou.

It's just my luck to have a cricket as the first enemy in the labyrinth, although I hope it makes getting out of the labyrinth alive easier.

Without attracting attention that is.

◇

"What is magic core?"
"Magic core can become money. If you give the things from a monster to a peddler, you can get various things."

Liza's answer isn't exactly wrong, but not what I wanted to hear, I guess expecting the jack-of-all-trades Nadi-san's bell-like reply is impossible.

Liza takes out a ball covered with green blood dirt from the monster. It's a red ball about half the size of a fist. Since the color is dull red, it's probably unusable as jewelries.

When she comes back, I pass a pouch from the bag to Liza. I also give her a bit dirty remaining cloth to wipe the clotted blood.

"Put the magic core inside this pouch. Also, use this spear."

I give the pouch to Pochi, and pass the cricket spear to Liza. The dagger which Liza had is handed over to Tama.
Exchanging equipments, truly RPG'stic huh~.

"Liza, for the next magic core retrieval, Tama and Pochi will help you, so teach them how to do it."
"Yes, I understand."
"Okay, nano desu."
"Ay~"

"Oh yeah, Pochi."
"Yes, nano desu."
"You don't have to force yourself to say nanodesu okay?"
"If I don't say it, I'll get spanked, nano desu."

I see, she was instilled to do it huh... Since I'm just a temporary master anyway, there's no need to correct it.

"Okay then, but I won't get mad even if you don't use it, so don't force yourself."
"Yes... nano desu."

We pray for whoever was the victim of the cricket and get out of the room. I wrote the name of the corpse in the memo.

I compared the girls' status before and after the battle, but beside their stamina, nothing has changed.

So they won't get experience just by being together?
Then, how do supply troops or priest raise their levels?

If I can raise the three's level then even if we meet more people in the way, it'd be no problem, however it's not that easy after all.

Since this world is game-like anyway, should I try a game-like approach?

"Tama, if you see a stone about as big as the magic core earlier on the ground pick it up."
"Ay!"

◇

We progress forward smoothly until the passage divides into branches.
They all lead to the same room, but one of the path has another room in the middle of the way. Either of them contains monster but the middle room has two level 10 caterpillar monster. And, there are also human there.... Let's help them.

"The road is branching~, nyan."

Just as the junction comes into our view, a report come in from Tama. You don't have to add strange words to establish your character, I said...
I praise Tama while patting her head. She seems ticklish.
Since Pochi looks at us enviously, I also pat her head gently.
Since both of them are about as tall as my chest, they're easy to pat. Are they about 120cm? Liza is a bit taller than me... around 165cm then.

"Let's go to the right passage."

We proceed further. There's something appearing in the radar but what is it?

"There are bugs up there~ nano desu."

Tama warned. This time she's imitating Pochi huh?
Now then, how do we beat invisible enemies?

Since I can grasp its rough position from radar, I look there.
I keep staring there.

AR display pops up with the monster's name and level.

I indiscriminately and repeatedly shoot at the place where the AR is.

Phew phew phew. Bota.

It seems that one of the shot hit, the caterpillar fall onto the ground.

"Tama, hit it with the stone."

Tama hits it for about 3 times. After two hit, the body of the caterpillar repels the stone. It seems that only one of the hit gives damage.
The caterpillar is approaching.

"Pochi, Tama, get back. Liza, come here. Hit it once from behind my back."

While holding back as much as I can, I kicked the caterpillar which was ramming here to gain time.
Liza attacks with the spear during that chance! The caterpillar's HP decreases for about 10%.
After confirming that, I shoot it twice until it die.

"Liza, Tama, I'll leave the recovery of the magic core to you. Pochi, follow me, there's another monster over there."

Tama hands over some stones to Pochi. How many did she pick?

There's the same caterpillar as earlier inside the room.
Furthermore, there are corpses of a young woman and a boy that looks like a slave on the ground. Unlike with the cricket earlier, they're not eaten.

"Pochi, when we get into the room, throw the stone at the monster from my side. When you run out of the stone, go back to Liza's place."

I casually enter the room and shoot the magic gun. As instructed, Pochi throw 2 stones from close range.
The caterpillar who got hit by the stone turn toward Pochi, spitting venom. In the nick of time, I kick the caterpillar's head shifting the direction. The caterpillar dies with just that kick.

Pochi who has finished throwing the stones runs back to the passage.

To the opposite passage that is.
Did she get flustered and mistook the way?

"Pochi, stop!"

I immediately chase after her. Detouring the caterpillar's corpse, I was a bit late.

"Uwa~~~ don't come, don't come here~~~!"

Huh? Who's that? It's not Pochi's voice. It's the man on passage!
I look at the radar. The position is dangerous.

"Pochi, stop!"

Okay, she can hear me properly now. Pochi is coming back here.
The man from earlier has disappeared from the radar.

Still, why did that young man run away?
Did he mistook Pochi for a monster?
Or did he feel guilty for leaving the two people in the earlier as sacrifices...

"Master! Are you alright?"
"You okay?"

Liza and Tama are coming here running.

"Ah, I'm okay. Let's go back to the room earlier to collect the magic core."
"I'm sorry, nano desu."

Pochi is apologizing with her ears falling flat. Her tail is also curling between her thigh.

"Pochi, it's fine to run away. But panicking is not okay. Do you understand?"
"...Yes."

I pat Pochi's head like, pom-pom.

When we got to the room, Liza and Tama are dismantling the caterpillar.
I write the two corpses name on the memo, I wonder if there's anything useful... I ask Pochi to examine them.
...Since well, you don't usually want to touch corpses, do you?

"Should I strip the clothes?"

Pochi asked, but we don't exactly need their clothes. I've only noticed just now, but the beastkin girls aren't wearing shoes.

"Take the footwears. Leave the clothes as it is."

Pochi passes over the collected things. The slave boy doesn't have anything, but the woman has a purse and jewelries like ring and necklaces. I create a folder in the storage and named it memento, then I put the mementos there. I will give it to the deceased's family later. I just got an idea to cut the hair of the two and put it in the memento folder.

The sandals are for Pochi and Tama to wear.
Liza, the biggest child, has to wait for her turn later. In the next room with the giant caterpillar, there should be shoes of the young man from earlier, so she wouldn't have to wait for long.

◇

The experiment to attack, however the damage, is apparently successful.
Tama and Liza are raised by one level, Pochi by two.

Apparently one automatically learn skill if they level up, Pochi got throwing skill, Tama got collecting skill, and Liza got dismantling skill.

But I don't have dismantling skill... I should try cutting fish later.

Wait, there's something strange with Liza's skills.
The dismantling skill is grayed out even though the spear skill is white.
Pochi's and Tama's skills are also grayed out.
I wonder if they aren't activated yet. They would be strengthened if I activate it but...

Their attribute values have also increased, but for example, STR is written as 15(18), so it doesn't seem like it instantly rises.

There are still around 100 room before the exit anyway, let's solve it until then!

I lead the beastkin girls (Tama-Pochi-Liza) out of the room.

>Title [Trainer (Tamer)] Acquired

2-10. Labyrinth of Demon (3)

Satou's here. The weak person who yearn for the sun so much, Satou.

Although dungeon is fine if it's in a game.

Fighting insect, insect, frog, insect, snake in a wet, damp basement is getting tiring.

◇

We've passed 6 rooms since then, but we didn't encounter any more living human. We came across several corpses though...

"Master, the magic core recovery is complete."
"Alright, let's take a break."

Liza and the other are passing the water bottle around after drinking for a mouthful.
Before I knew it, they way they call me have changed from [Danna-sama (Mister)] to [Goshujin-sama (Master)]. Since it seems easier for them to use that, I leave it alone.
<TLN: Yep, I've made a huge mistake in the last two chapter. Amended them.>

Liza drops the water bottle.
Water is spilling from the fallen bottle...

"I, I'm very sorry! Master!!!"

Liza desperately picks up the water bottle. Her hands seems to be unsteady.
Come to think of it, Pochi's and Tama's throwing accuracies were bad on the battle earlier too...

"Are you tired?"
"I'm very sorry! I wasted the important water. Please punish me in any way."

...You're exaggerating. No, Liza seems to seriously think that.

"Liza, we can just obtain more water. Rather than that, is your body okay?"
"I'm sorry... I feel heavy since earlier, I've tried to move my limbs, but they won't budge."

Pochi and Tama drink the water while lying on the ground looking lifeless. Confirming their status, there doesn't seem to be any abnormality. They're probably tired.

"The break is canceled, let's take a full rest instead."

I lift Pochi and Tama in my arm and drink them the water.
I distribute sweet potato fries to the three. The three look very sleepy, but maybe because they're hungry, they have some vigor left to keep eating.

"After you finish your meal, sleep for 3 hours."

Pochi and Tama sleep with my legs as pillows. Liza shyly curled up into a ball a bit away.

When the three fast asleep, I observe their status.

The attribute values are increasing by 1 every 10 minutes, getting back to its original values. 2 hours after the rest, the grayed out skills turn white.

Speaking of skills, if the three leveled up then their skills would increase right?
They don't get skill just by doing something?

Apparently the improvement from level up is applied after you sleep.
...this is totally like like the masterpiece from the labyrinth's classic. It's scary

to age if you're not on the stable.
<TLN: Some kind of Japanese idiom maybe? I don't understand either, sorry. Edit: Apparently, it's Wizardry reference.>

◇

We broke through more rooms after that. The limit before we need to rest was about 3 level up based on earlier, we should rest after breaking through two more rooms...

"Stop!"

It's rare to see Tama warns without being sluggish.
But there's no enemy on the front?

"What's wrong?"
"The ground is~ strange?"

She answers with a question. There's something wrong on it, but she doesn't know what kind, is it? I watch the ground carefully, the ground texture do looks different. Although the color doesn't differ...
Before I can understand what's the discrepancy is, an AR display with [Trap: Life Drain] written, pops up.

That's right, this is a labyrinth, there should be traps.
Since there wasn't any until now, I forgot about it.

"Well done, Tama. There's a trap there."
"Ay!"

I stroke Tama's head and cat ears.

I let the three withdraw and try throwing stone at the trap, but it doesn't active. From the name of the trap, it probably only reacts to living things.

Since I don't know the range of the trap, I can't be sure if we can safely walk through the edge of the passage either. I won't even consider making the beastkin girls step through it.

There are rat monsters on the room after this, maybe I'll try to lure them here with stones.
I throw 3 stones in a row.

"Rats are coming."

In response to Pochi's report, I make the three fall back. The rats here are only level 10 and weak, but they act in group. Since I can't be sure if they can break through trap or not, let's take some distance.

The rats are caught in black spark far from the trap's location. In the end, the 3 rats are all caught up in separate location. It seems that traps are scattered around in this passage.

>[Trap Release Skill Acquired]
>[Trap Usage Skill Acquired]
>[Trap Discovery Skill Acquired]

Since the trap might be the type that can reactivate, we leave the magic cores behind.
I immediately allocate skill point to just Trap Discovery skill and activate it.

◇

Liza stab at the giant frog's mout with all her might. Pochi and Tama then jump from each opposite side to deliver the finishing strike to the frog's head with their daggers.

"Alright! You did well!"
"Yes!"

"Ay!"
"Nano desu!"

I praise them for the first monster kill they did by themselves. Since the opponent was only a simple level 10 with just tongue restrain as a special skill, I tried to let them to do it, and do it well they did. The fighting power of beastkin is higher than human of the same level after all.

This room is 3 times wider than any other room before. There are possibilities of more enemies with this much space, but I can't sense any sign of them.

There's a house on the edge of the room. The roof is cleanly cut in two. It was probably swallowed up with the creation of the labyrinth. Unfortunately, there are no human signs on the radar...

Liza is dismantling the frog, Pochi and Tama are keeping guard of the entrances. This time, it's Liza's turn to dismantle huh. Since there's that skill things, I've assigned a rotation for the duty.

"Pochi, Tama, let's check out that house. Follow me."

I go toward the house with the two.
There aren't any corpse from casualties in the house but various things instead. Apparently it was the house of a wealthy person.

Two ornamental short swords surprisingly have decent attack power when I checked it with appraisal skill. In a stereotypical fashion, there's a hidden safe behind a wall painting. I blow the lock with magic gun and check the inside. In addition with a bag of golds and jewels, there's also a magic material called Dragon Powder in a small vial. Was the owner an alchemist?

We collect the small amount of jewelries, but leave the big things, like statues or other work or arts, behind.
Among the work of arts, there are a couple of stuffed animals on pedestals. Though I don't really care, I wonder if they were in the process of being

repaired? I sort of want to see the stuffing process of fantasy animals.

>[Excavation Skill Acquired]
>[Treasure Discovery Skill Acquired]
>[Treasure Chest Unlock Skill Acquired]

There's an ignition magic tool (Tinder Rod) in the kitchen. That's the only magic tool here, but we put a frying pan, a pot, and tablewares for 4 people in the bag.
Since I can get water anytime from the water jug, and there are a lot of small water bottles there, so I put oils inside them to make improvised molotov bombs and put them inside the Storage.

"Here, cheeses and dried meats! Nano desu~♪"

On a collapsed furniture there are big breads, 3 lump of cheeses and some smoked meats inside. After confirming that they're not rotten with the AR, I slice some pieces for Pochi and Tama.

"Let's eat the remainder together with Liza."
"Ay!"
"Yes! Delicious no desu~."

I give the bag with the food to Tama, and bag with accessories and weapons to Pochi, while I'm holding the water jug and tub, we get out.

When we get out, the recovery of magic core is complete.

"Master, I have a request... Is it alright for me to light fire?"
"Fire in underground? What is your reason?"

Liza falters for a bit,

"U, um well, I want to eat the frog's meat... I'm sorry."
"You don't need to apologize, but is that safe to eat?"
"Yes, it's fine. I've dismantled and eat frog from the same family a long time

ago. There are internal organs with poison but if we avoid it, it's alright. But if it's not baked there are a danger of poisoning..."
Well, even if this is in underground there's an airflow, and we already climbed up for quite a bit so there's no worry of lack of oxygen.

"Alright, I permit it."

Liza instructs Pochi and Tama to cut the frog's legs, while she herself is taking out wood blocks and chip from the bag and prepare it. I see, it was for this reason that she was collecting woods in every room.

I stop Liza from using flint to light fire, and use the ignition magic tool (Tinder Rod) from earlier to ignite fire... Chakka○n?
<TLN: http://www.vesta-tokai.co.jp/catalog/chakkaman/>

I give the cookwares and the tablewares gotten from the house to Liza.
Before long, Tama and Pochi hold the leg meat high up their head.

"Meat~"
"Nano desu~"

...I wonder, they look even happier than with the smoked meat earlier.

Liza cuts the meat into pieces, and lines it up on the frying pan.

She pierces the baked meats with skewers and presents it to me.
...Do I have to eat it?

"Thank you Liza."

I prepare myself and eat it... It taste a bit like chicken but honestly, it's a bit light. I guess it can't be helped since we don't have seasonings like salt though. It's a hassle to go back to that house just to search for seasoning.

The three people stare at me eating.
Oh right, they're waiting for permission.

"Stop looking and eat. If you don't properly eat and rest, we can't get out of the labyrinth!"

After getting the permission, Pochi and Tama start eating the meat on the frying pan. Liza isn't only frying the meat, she also properly eats it.

I glances at them while lightly toasting the black bread, cheese and the smoked meat to eat it.

After that, a cycle of dismantling, baking and eating repeat for about 30 minutes, the banquet only finish after the fuel run out.
Per the suggestion of Liza, I wrap a lump of meat in cloth and put it in the bag just in case.

If the condition is the same like before, they will get tired after 2,3 battles, so we'll make use of this time to rest to its fullest.
I let the three to bath in the tub, give them new clothes to change, and let them sleep with a blanket.

Although they'll soon get dirty in battle, Don't you feel better to go sleep with clean clothes?

2-11. Labyrinth of Demon (4)

Satou's here. Labyrinth from classic series usually has treasures, monsters and mysterious traps.
While the danger is immense, the returns you got from easy level up are also huge, these can be said to be the real thrill of the labyrinth.
A party consisting only of warriors sure have pretty bad balance isn't it?

◇

After two more rest along the way, we're finally around 80% of the way out of the labyrinth.
Since the rest before the last one, we haven't seen any more victim's corpses.

Pochi and Tama's equipment have changed to the ornamental short swords. That's the extent of the equipment change, but the three people are now level 13. It seems that their stats are about 3 level higher than the average human kin.
Pochi has [Enemy Search], [Throwing], [Dismantling], and [Short Sword] skills, Tama has [Dismantling],[Collecting] and [Short Sword], Liza has [Cooking],[Dismantling], [Spear] and [Thrusting] skills.

It can be said that their strengths are now world apart from when I first meet them.
If the enemy has no abnormal status attacks then even if it's level 20, the three can handle it. Although it could be dangerous to fight several enemies of the same level since there are no shield users...

"That wall~ is strange?"

Tama senses a strange sensation from the wall inside the room.

When I stare at it, I found a [Hidden Door]. Checking the map, there's

certainly a passage behind.

However...
I change the map view point to bird's eye.
About 5 meter from this room, there's a perpendicular shape with 100 meter diameter right below. A pit, or rather, since it's 3 meter depth, a pitfall trap?
I warn Tama and co not to get close to it.

There's a crossroad after this, beyond that, there seem to be a room with 3 survivors inside. Since they've been resting for 1 hour, it's probably a safe zone there.
Although there are only 5 room left before the exit, because they don't have a map, it can't be helped.

"Everyone, stop!"

The radar indicate a red dot indicating enemy approaching with great speed.
Since it's only 1 enemy, I wonder if it's attacking the room earlier?
While falling back I check the enemy's info.
Undead Beast, undead kin, 5 meter length, 2 meter height. The bite can paralyze, attack include the claws. Very agile. Weakness: Holy element.

"Level is... 40 you say?"

The labyrinth's sweeper huh...
It really does feel like the game of old. An abnormally strong enemy will appear to kill the player who's running out of time.

Before we come into contact with the enemy, we get back to the room.
I evacuate Pochi, Tama and Liza to the corner of the room. As expected, the enemy is dangerous. If they're careless, a single blow could kill them.

The enemy casually appear from the passage. Exerting force only when it's necessary huh...
It's a jet black panther-like beast with a red horn on its forehead.

The Undead Beast disappear from views!
I hurriedly look at the radar, but its position hasn't changed...

The enemy attacks from above!
It jumps and kicks the ceiling to plunge its body!
Behind my back, I feel that the floor below cracks.

To be so quick even though it's an undead... If it begin to jump around the three beastkin girls could be in danger.
Fighting it frontally is no good.

Seemingly to harass me, the undead beast opens its jaw before starting its bite attack leaving its open.
I overhead throw it to the wall.

The Undead Beast lands on the wall,

I put power in my foot and attack,

...It then breaks through the wall and fall (to the pit). Amen~.

◇

Now then, why don't we join with the survivors?

Beyond the crossroads, the floor is plastered with sticky white threads.

"Stickystick~"
"My feet is sticky~ no desu."
"I wonder if it's spider's silks?"

Tama and Pochi clear it with short swords.

In the room, there are 7 cocoons. The 3 survivors are among them. We should

rescue them while the spider is gone.
When the person inside the cocoon realize that we are closing they begin to wriggle.

Just in case, I check the contents inside before we help them.

Nidoren. Slave trader, 40 years old, level 11, [Negotiation], [Torture], and [Arithmetic] skills.
Viscount Jin Belton. Noble, 33 years old, level 15, [Fire Magic], [Flame Magic], and [Social] skills.
Viscount's daughter Tana Belton. Noble, 14 years old, level 3, [Social], [Etiquette] skills.

The viscount is a good potential force.
Even so, why was a noble in that square?

We're splitting the work to save them.
I handle the viscount, Liza the daughter, Pochi and Tama are responsible for the trader.

Halfway through the rescuing, a spider coming from below are perceived by the radar. Just like with the undead beast earlier, there seems to be a pit here too.

"It's the enemy! Pochi, Tama, Liza, stop the rescue for the moment and prepare to intercept!"

The beastkin girls ready their weapon for interception.
After series of battles, these cooperations are to be expected.

Fortunately the victim's mouths are clogged up, a blessing in disguise. No noisy things are good.

A spider is crawling out from the hole on the floor.
First I hit its head with stones to deprive its consciousness. Then Liza skewers its head with her spear, while Pochi and Tama slice the joint of its

body.

I thought it'd die with the first attack but... To not die even after its head has been pierced, truly a monster.

Liza receives the overhead sweep of the spider's leg, Pochi and Tama slice and dice with the short swords during that gap, shaving off the spider's health.
Since it seems that it would take some time, I throw a pebble in secret to give the finishing blow.

I leave the magic core recovery to Tama, and get back to rescuing with other members.

"I'm saved. I come from the the distinguished family of the founder Yamato-sama, the current head of Belton Viscount, Viscount Jin Belton. Expect rewards after we get out of here!"
"Thank you very much, Viscount-sama. I'm Satou, a merchant."

Just as we finished introductions, the viscount's saving is finished. The viscount goes to her daughter's place, takes the knife from Liza and continues the rescue by himself.
Is it because he doesn't want demi-human to touch her daughter, or because he's thinking of saving her himself.

"Thank you for saving me, I'm Nidoren, a merchant. I'd be disliked by the girls, since I deal with slaves trading."
"I'm a fledgling merchant, Satou."
"A merchant... is it? I thought that you're surely an adventurer."

While listening to Nidoren-shi, I present him cold waters.

"Do you know about adventurers?"
"Yes... ah! It's explorers in Shiga kingdom isn't it. Killing demon in the labyrinth, salvaging magic cores and treasures, it's a high risk high return job."

Tama returns with the magic core and I receive it.

"Putting aside the size of the magic core here, probably because the labyrinth is young, its purity is low."

According to Nidoren-shi, refined magic cores are used in the creation of magic tools, and the higher the purity the more efficient its magic operation is resulting in more advanced magic tools creation.

"Still, it was a brilliant cooperation, the training was certainly long isn't it? Such good slaves can easily fetch 20 gold coin each. I'd love to deal with you even once."

It seems to be better to not tell him that they're not officially my slaves. Since it looks it'd just come back at me.

I'm leaving mementos recoveries from the cocoons to the beastkin girls.
I pass foods to
viscount Belton and Nidoren. Of course, it's not the frog meats. The viscount heartily eats even while complaining the poor foods. The viscount's daughter only eats the cheese, and sips the water. Surely, she's exhausted.

◇

3 room left before the exit. The viscount has been shouldering the viscount's daughter this whole time. Should I carry her in my back? I suggested that, but it was rejected.

The problem is the next room. Like a dungeon made by a bad GM, located in unavoidable position is a monster house.
Leading the pack is a level 35 demon, then level 30 Skeleton Knight, Skeleton Deathschyte and Skeleton Warrior. The others are level 10-15 regular Skeleton Soldier.

Should I job change to masked hero?

Checking on the map, the handsome middle-aged priest is 10 rooms apart from here. I intended to join up with him, but the viscount's daughter exhaustion is extreme. Furthermore, each room is inhabited by 3 monsters from undead type. If we are to join up then the breakthrough would probably requires 2-3 hours.
If we manage to breakthrough the next room then the next after would be a vacant room with no enemy but...

Liza and Tama who were sent for scouting come back.

"Lots of bones~"
"Something spherical with wings is flying in the room. The others are approximately 20 skeleton monster. I think it's better to search for a detour..."

It's a sound assessment, but the exit is just ahead~
Well then, it's time to exhibit my special deception skill! ...orz.

2-12. Labyrinth of Demon (5)

Satou's here. It's hard to make people believing something that I don't believe myself.
A little bit more until the exit.
I want to get back to daily life asap.

◇

"The exit is probably after this. I have two reasons, first, there's a demon who, up until now, was nowhere to be seen. The other, the number of enemies is clearly different than anything before."

Those reasons sure are weak eh~

"...Why do those reasons mean that the exit is just up ahead, I can't understand."
"How about we take a detour as suggested by that demi-human instead?"

You're absolutely right... however! It's my turn now!

"Viscount-sama, did you forget? This is a labyrinth made by demon. They would put their kind in the place where they don't want to let people pass."

Dang, I should've used this reasoning from the start.

"But we are completely outnumbered. I don't think we can beat such large crowds just by ourselves."

I know right~

"Of course we have a chance... That is with the magic of viscount-sama."

I haven't seen him use it even once, but the fire storm used on the demon on

the square back then was flashy. It should be enough as a shield.
Oops, I shouldn't have known about the magic of the viscount.

"As you may know, the undead kin are weak to fire. Moreover, I've heard rumor that says viscount-sama is the best fire magician in the earldom."
"Umu, because even like this, I'm the vice-captain of the magic soldier troops."

The viscount doesn't seem to wholly against the idea. So he's a superior of Zena-san huh?

"Viscount-sama, I have a question for the sake of strategy planning, how many time can you use fire storm?"
"The limit for fire storm is one use. After casting fire storm we can block the entrance with fire pillar and wait."

Fumu, is it a magic with bad fuel consumption?
It's convenient that the talk has suddenly progressed to doing the battle.
When the view is obstructed by the fire storm, I'd just exterminate the enemies with coin attacks.

>[Strategy Skill Acquired]

◇

Viscount Belton's fire storm is raging.
The winged eyeball uttered something in the distance but the battle started without anyone hearing it.
Surprise attack is basic.

"Pochi, Tama, throw stones at enemies who's approaching. Liza, thrust the enemy who passes over the stone throws."

I give commands to the beastkin girls.

Now then, let's smash them before the fire storm disappear.

I hit the center of eyeball of the winged eyeball with the last piece of holy stone. I don't know what to say to that huge exposed weak point. The holy stone penetrates the demon, smashing the bones on the back, hitting the wall. The roaring sound was masked by the fire storm's sound.

One set of several copper coins are used to destroy 3 high level skeleton monster. Coin shotgun it is.

When the fire storm subside, only 7 small fry skeleton monsters with half their health points remain.
For now, let's push the achievement.

"Wonderful viscount-sama. Weakened by the fire storm, the skeletons become brittle and were destroyed one by one with the stones throwing."
"Fumu, the filthy undead monsters were purified by my flame magic."
"That's exactly right, this is the first time I've seen such enormous magic, what a tremendous fire power!"

The viscount with triumphant look along with Nidoren-shi and his praise. I leave him to attend for the viscount's mood, and follow after the clean up of the small fry (hereafter, zako) skeletons with the beastkin girls.

Liza attack the feet of a zako skeleton to destroy its balance, then Pochi and Tama strike together to destroy it. Hiding behind the fire left on the ground, I destroy the skeletons with copper coins. I think it's because of throwing skill, the zako skeleton's health is easily depleted by just flicking a copper coin with my thumb ...Is there no rejection skill (Shidan). Even though it's cool.

>Title [Undead Slayer] Acquired
>Title [Demon Slayer] Acquired

◇

Soon the clean-up of the zako skeletons end, we head toward the exit. Since it'd be troublesome if monster reinforcement come, I leave the magic cores behind.

The passage is different from what we've passed so far, the floor is made by paving stones like the one found inside the room. The passage is 4 meter wide, 3 meter high. Thanks to that, it's bright. The passage continues in a straight line for a while, and break into a curve before the last room.

"The outside's smell, nano desu~"

Pochi reports happily while running around me in circle.
I've become considerably accustomed compared to the first time.

"Let's eat something delicious when we get out."
"Meat~"
"Meat meat~"

Since Liza is in the very back she didn't enter into the conversation, but Pochi and Tama look so happy.

Reflected in the radar, numerous lights appear in succession in the last room.

However, it's not red light which indicates enemy but white light which indicates neutral position instead.
It's probably the territory's army.

The handsome middle-aged priest has reached the skeleton room earlier too before I know it. What kind of trick did he use?

Well it's good either way.
I feel like drinking cold beer and taking a shower right now. Though it's probably unrealizable.

"There are people's voices~"

Pochi said that while pointing the front.
The passage turn is coming into view. After 3 turn from here, it's the exit.

"The wall on the front~ is strange?"

Tama reports. I confirmed from the map that there's a pit behind the wall.
Maybe it's like the labyrinth shortcut gimmick in a game.

"There's a hidden door here too. Do not touch it."
"Ay!"
"Yes! nano desu~"

When we're passing through the hidden door...

Beast arms break through the hidden door!

I kick the door's fragmented pieces while an enormous body comes into view!

I push both Pochi and Tama to the edge of the passage.

I also want to jump out but if I carelessly avoid, it's certain the three on the back will meet harm's way. I catch the beast, killing its momentum, then it kicks the floor. The beast's jumping power is heavy and powerful, it quickly pass overhead the three to land behind them.

They finally catch up with the unfolding event.
Screams raise. Groan voices. All are overwritten by the roar of the beast.

It's the reappearance of the Undead Beast thought to have been dealt with.
No, it has two horns, different beast huh.

Leaving that aside, what to do?

It climbed all the way up the pit, it's impossible to deal with it like before.
Since there's level difference, if I ask the cooperation of the beastkin girls, they could die.
I'd like to ask for the viscount's magic help like on the bone hall, but his magic power is insufficient...

My thought is racing while avoiding the biting attack of the Undead Beast.

"■■■■ ■■ ■■■ ■■■■ Air Hammer"

A mass of invisible compressed air come from the exit's direction forcing the Undead Beast to retreat.
I was rolled up with it.

Undead Beast, seemingly in effort to reduce the magic's force, jump back to near the room's entrance in the back.

The door there opens, and the handsome middle-aged priest comes out of it.
What a bad timing.

"Get back to the room, it's the Undead Beast!"

Thanks to the Loudspeaker skill and the echo in the passage, voice louder than I thought comes out.

The handsome middle-aged priest begin casting spell without panicking.

Ridiculous!

You'll die in a blink of an eye before you even finish the casting.

The Undead Beast turns around after hearing the chanting.

Can't be helped, let's change its target to me and play the avoid war. Then let's defeat it with a strong attack slipped in the middle of the priest's magic.

"■■ Purification (Turn Undead)!"

Short. What's that.

The undead beast stopped moving, and turn back into a stuffed animal.

It can't even stand up on its own, the menace is gone.
GJ, handsome middle-aged priest-san.

"Satou-zannn~~~~"

Before I turn toward the voice, I'm quickly pushed. By Zena-san equipped with leather armor.

"It's good that you're awightt~~~ It's good~~~~"

Rubbing her head on my chest, she's delighted for the reunion.
The magic earlier was Zena-san's huh. From the other side, soldiers begin to appear, helping to rescue the viscount.

The beastkin girls are coming to my side, but they're standing by in a place a bit far. Liza put Pochi and Tama who tried to come here in check.

"I'm home, Zena-san."

Zena-san scrubs hear tears and lift her face.

"Welcome back, Satou-san."

The smile of tearful Zena-san looks awfully attractive.